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THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" The Assistant Commercial Tax Officers cannot be running schools for the merchants."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" Not running schools, Sir. If they find any defect in the maintenance of accounts, is it not their duty to give them proper instructions first, instead of inflicting fines and penalties?"

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" People who come forward to do business should conform to rules under the Sales Tax Act. If they do not do so they are subject to penalties, and it is not the duty of the officers to give them warning."

• SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" Is the Hon. Minister aware that the rules are not published in the regional language, Telugu and Kannada so far as the districts of Bellary and Anantapur are concerned, and we have to purchase the rules in English and translate them to the merchants in the local vernacular."

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" I will take the suggestion of the hon. Member. If they are not available in Telugu and Kannada, they will be made available, Sir."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" Will the Hon. Minister enquire whether the rules are available in Telugu and Kannada?"

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" My information is they are available in the regional language. If they are not available they will be published in the regional language and made available to the merchants."

*Action to be taken against merchants who go against rules.*

* 135 *Q.*—SRI B. BHIMA RAO : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have issued any instructions to the Commercial Tax Officers to levy sales tax on merchants who have not strictly complied with the rules with regard to the date of submission of their returns or applications for the issue of necessary licences;

(*b*) whether the Government have made provision for the imposition of a nominal penalty in such cases; and

(*c*) if not, whether they propose to make such a provision in future?

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" (*a*) Where an exemption is granted subject to the condition that a licence is obtained or that a particular return is filed within the dates prescribed in the Act or in the rules, the assessing authority will be within his powers to levy sales tax if the returns or applications for licence are not filed within the dates prescribed. No instructions have been issued by the Government in the matter.

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" (b) & (c) A licence is not ordinarily granted or renewed with effect from a date prior to the date of receipt of the application and will expire on the 31st day of March of the year in respect of which it is granted, or renewed. Under the proviso to rule 6 (3) of the Madras General Sales Tax Rules, 1939, the Commercial Tax Officer may, in any deserving case, direct the licensing authority to accept an application for the grant or renewal of a licence received after the prescribed date and issue the licence with retrospective effect on the applicant's paying as penalty a sum not exceeding the limits prescribed in that proviso."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" Is the Hon. Minister aware that if the monthly returns did not reach the officers by the first of every month, and say, there is a delay of a day or two, sales tax is levied. In such cases would the Hon. Minister consider the desirability of levying only a nominal penalty; say, if there is a delay of a day or two or three."

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" I think the discretion is already there vested in the officers."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" From the rules I see no discretion is vested in them. Even if the returns do not reach the officer with a slight delay of two or three days, will the Hon. Minister see that the merchants are not subjected to payment of sales tax."

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" If it is a widespread thing, if all the officers are acting like that, we shall think of issuing some general instructions."

SRI B. BHIMA RAO :—" May I request the Minister to see such instructions are issued? "

THE HON. SRI K. MADHAVA MENON :—" It is not a question."

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" With regard to money matters we cannot be too lenient." (Laughter.)

*Proposal to take over petrol companies by the Government.*

* 136 Q.—ABDUL LATIF FAROOKHI SAHIB BAHADUR : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state whether, in view of the scheme of nationalization of motor transport in the whole Province, the Government have under consideration any proposal to take over petrol companies as well?

THE HON. SRI B. GOPALA REDDI :—" The answer is in the negative."

ABDUL LATIF FAROOKHI SAHIB BAHADUR :—" In view of the scheme of nationalization of motor transport in the whole Province, will it not be advantageous to the Government to take over petrol companies, as it will augment the resources? "